

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 3072

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, DA

SUBJECT: GENERAL ELECTION - NO. 12 ANALYSIS

REF: (A) COPENHAGEN 3054

SUMMARY: PRIMARY CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN FROM DANISH DECEMBER 4
ELECTION IS THAT EXTENSIVE VOTER DISSATISFACTION WAS DIRECTED
AGAINST OLD-LINE PARTIES IN GENERAL MORE THAN AGAINST SOCIAL DEMO-
CRATIC GOVT'S LEFT-WING ORIENTATIONAS SUCH. GOVT FORMATION
WILL BE DIFFICULT AND NEW ELECTIONS IN THE NEW YEAR HIGHLY
PROBABLE. END SUMMARY.

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1. DANISH VOTERS LEFT NO DOUBT OF THEIR DISSATISFACTION AND DESIRE FOR CHANGE IN DECEMBER 4 ELECTION. AN ESTIMATED ONE VOTER IN TWO VOTED FOR A DIFFERENT PARTY THAN HE DID IN 1971. THE 25 PERCENT OF ELECTORATE WHICH POLLS HAD INDICATED WOULD SUPPORT TWO NEW PROTEST PARTIES DID SO BUT AMONG THIS GROUP GLISTRUP'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (P) DID SURPRISINGLY BETTER THAN JAKOBSEN'S CENTER DEMOCRATS (CD) VOTER DISSATISFACTION APPEARS DIRECTED AGAINST EXISTING PARTY SYSTEM, AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE, HIGH TAX SYSTEM ASSOCIATED WITH IT, RATHER THAN MERELY AGAINST THE RADICALISM OF ANKER JORGENSEN'S SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVT. THIS CONCLUSION SUGGESTED BY FACTS THAT 1) MAVERICK GLISTRUP DID MARKEDLY BETTER THAN JAKOBSEN'S CENTER DEMOCRATS, (SEE REFTEL A) 2) SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LOSSES, WHILE LARGEST IN PARTY HISTORY, WERE LESS THAN PREDICTED IN PRE-ELECTION POLLS, REFLECTING A LATE SWING TOWARD THAT PARTY AND 3) CONSERVATIVE PARTY LOSSES WERE DEEPER THAN THOSE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, WHILE OTHER ESTABLISHED PARTIES ON BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT ALSO LOST HEAVILY.

2. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S LOSS OF ONE-THIRD OF ITS FOLKETING REPRESENTATION (300,000 VOTERS) REPRESENTS GREATEST SINGLE LOSS IN PARTY'S HISTORY. THIS COULD RESULT IN SHIFT IN PARTY LEADERSHIP (SEE REFTEL B) DURING NEXT DAYS OR WEEKS. PARTY'S IMPROVED SHOWING OVER PRE-ELECTION POLLS, TOGETHER WITH FACT THAT OTHER OLD-LINE PARTIES SUFFERED EQUALLY DRASTICALLY, IS, HOWEVER, EXPECTED TO WORK IN ANKER JORGENSEN'S FAVOR.

3. ALTHOUGH DANISH COMMUNIST PARTY (DKP) WAS RETURNED TO PARLIAMENT AFTER TWELVE YEARS ABSENCE, IT DID SO AT EXPENSE OF SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SF). THUS, NUMBER OF SEATS HELD BY PARTIES TO LEFT OF SDP REMAINS UNCHANGED AT 17, INDICATING SDP HELD ITS LEFT-WING VOTERS, IF NOT TAKING SOME FROM SF. SF'S SUBSTANTIAL LOSS APPEARS DUE TO ITS OVERESTIMATING ANTI-EC ISSUE. ON THAT ISSUE SF WAS SQUEEZED BETWEEN DKP, WHICH HAD BEEN EVEN MORE VIRULENTLY ANTI-EC, AND SDP, WHICH HAD SUCCESSFULLY RE-EDUCATED ITS ANTI-MARKET FACTION TO ACCEPT "REALITY" OF DANISH MEMBERSHIP.

4. TURNING TO THREE OLD-LINE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES, THERE ARE TWO NOTEWORTHY FACTS:- THE UNEXPECTED EXTENT OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S (K) LOSSES, AND THE RELATIVELY BETTER SHOWING CHALKED UP BY MODERATE LIBERALS IN COMPARISON TO THE RADICAL LIBERALS (R), THE FIRST
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APPEARS DUE TO PUBLIC DISSENSION AMONG CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERS, COUPLED WITH FACT THAT GLISTRUP, CHRISTIAN PEOPLES PARTY AND JUSTICE PARTY ALL CUT MOST DIRECTLY INTO CONSERVATIVE SUPPORT. MORE MODERATE LOSS SUFFERED BY MODERATE LIBERALS REFLECTS FACT THAT IT DID SURPRISINGLY WELL IN URBAN AREAS, WHERE IT TRADITIONALLY GETS FEW VOTES. MODERATE LIBERALS APPEARED TO HAVE COMPENSATED FOR SOME OF THEIR LOSS TO GLISTRUP BY ATTRACTING CONSERVATIVE VOTERS UNABLE TO GO SO FAR AS TO VOTE FOR LATTER. THUS MODERATE LIBERAL LEADER

POUL HARTLING MAY BE AS STRONG A PRIME MINISTER CANDIDATE AS RADICAL LIBERAL (R) LEADER HILMAR BAUNSGAARD. BAUNSGAARD HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED, BY FORMER PRIME MINISTER JENS OTTO KRAG AMONG OTHERS, AS ARCHITECT OF BOURGEOIS BLOC'S TACTIC OF JOINT RESISTANCE TO COOPERATION WITH SOCIALIST GOVT A TACTIC STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY CONSERVATIVE LEADER ERIK NINN-HANSEN. RELATIVELY GRATER LOSSES BY THESE TWO PARTIES HAS REINFORCED CONCLUSION THAT VOTER PROTEST LESS CONCERNED WITH SOCIALIST THREAT THAN IT WAS WITH GENERAL INEFFECTIVENESS OF POLITICAL SYSTEM IN GENERAL.

5. OF SMALLER NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES, CHRISTIAN PEOPLES PARTY WAS CLEARLY BENEFICIARY OF REACTION TO DANISH FILM INSTITUTE'S CONTROVERSIAL SUBSIDY TO PORNOGRAPHIC RELIGIOUS FILM AND OF WIDESPREAD OPPOSITON TO FREE ABORTION LAW WHICH BECAME EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1. CAUSE OF JUSTICE PARTY SUCCESS AS YET UNCLEAR, THOUGH ITS ANTI-EC STAND, UNIQUE AMONG RIGHT-WING GROUPS, WAS PROBABLY KEY FACTOR.

6. OUTCOME LEAVES TRADITIONAL SOCIALIST AND NON-SOCIALIST BLOCS IN SAME RELATIVE BALANCE AS BEFORE ELECTION (S-SF-C AT 63; KVR AT 58), BUT SO REDUCED IN SIZE THAT NEITHER IS IN POSITION TO FORM MAJORITY GOVT, EVEN IF SUPPORTED BY JAKOBSEN'S CD AND OTHER SMALL GROUPS. (ALL PARTIES SAY AT PRESENT THEY ARE UNWILLING TO COOPERATE WITH GLISTRUP'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY.) ALTHOUGH FINAL RESULTS OF NEGOTIATIONS UNPREDICTABLE, TWO GENERAL POSSIBILITIES STAND OUT: (A) AN ACROSS-THE-MIDDLE S-RVK COALITION HAS BEEN MADE MORE POSSIBLE BY DRASTIC LOSSES OF ALLOLD-LINE PARTIES INCLUDING SF WHICH THUS BECOMES LESS OF A THREAT ON SDP FLANK. SUCH A COALITION COULD ONLY BE VERY SHORT-LIVED AND WOULD BE DIRECTED ESPECIALLY AGAINST NEW PROTEST PARTIES (IF SDP SHIFTS LEADERSHIP, HOWEVER, THIS COALITION COULD BEMORE PERMANENT SOLUTION.) AND (B) SOME FORM OF MINORITY BOURGEOIS COALITION, PROBABLY WITHOUT CONSERVATIVES, WITH AD HOC SUPPORT FROM ONE OR BOTH PROTEST PARTIES. SUCH

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A GOVT WOULD BE BASICALLY DIRECTED AGAINST THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF PERPETUATING THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE SDP AND THE CENTER DEMOCRATS. EITHER ALTERNATIVE OFFERS DANISH POLITICS LITTLE PROSPECT OF STABILITY SO THAT AN EARLY ELECTION WOULD APPEAR TO BE HIGHLYPROBABLE.
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